



TOWN OF ESSEX
Conservation Commission

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Executive Board

Kathleen Tucker, Chairman
Jeffrey Lovelace, Vice Chair

Regular Members

Frank Hall
Richard Helmecki
Jim O'Brien
Mark Reeves
Vacancy

Alternate Member

Vacancy
Vacancy

Town of Essex Conservation Commission
Regular Meeting September 8, 2022, Moved to Auditorium, 7:00 pm

1. Call to Order and Roll Call: K. Tucker called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. In attendance: F. Hall, R. Helmecki, J. Lovelace, J. O'Brien, M. Reeves, K. Tucker.
2. Public Comments: There were no public comments.
3. Review and Approve August 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes: J. Lovelace asked for the following phrase regarding the location of phragmites to be added: Page 2, C. Viney Hill Brook Preserve: 1. Phragmites Patch (add) **"in the vicinity of Broadwalk:"**... With a motion by M. Reeves, and a 2nd by J. Lovelace, the minutes were approved with the above addition. F. Hall abstained from voting as he was not in attendance for the August 11 meeting.
4. Old Business to include trail reports and management issues in town preserves:

K. Tucker asked to move the discussion of the ELT Chestnut tree plantings from B.1.: Canfield Meadow Woods to D. Other. With a motion by J. Lovelace and a 2nd by M. Reeves, this change to the agenda was approved.

A. Bushy Hill Preserve: R. Helmecki reported that he walked at BHP today and that it looks good. The pond is mostly dry. (See photo on next page.) There's some reed grass growth in the pond. It was decided that the group would meet to weed whack the growth (when it gets cooler). Helmecki stated that additional trail markers are needed and that he would contact Computer Signs, LLC, a company that ECC previously used for marker supplies.



R. Helmecki_photo of dry bog pond at BHP

1. Preliminary Planning Boy Scout Workshop: J. O'Brien reported that Greg Ruel, a teacher and Scout Master, is looking for projects and that Essex and Deep River will be combining their troop membership. J. O'Brien plans to explain what property boundaries are and talk about staking and the tools involved. He will find out about the Scout Badge requirements. The Boy Scouts will be invited to BHP for a 10:00 am workshop on October 15.

B. Canfield Meadow Woods: J. O'Brien said that he regularly reads the ELT reports and CMW looks good. George Wendell, ELT steward, asked for in-put regarding dogs equipped with electronic devises, not standard leashes. Jim said it is the responsibility of the dog owner to keep their dogs under control and that liability is with the dog owner.

1. Discuss ELT Chestnut tree plantings (move to D. Other).

C. Viney Hill Brook Preserve:

1. Phragmites Patch
2. Wollocks Pond Trail

F. Hall sent the following written report to the group:

"I took a walk around Viney Hill Brook Park this afternoon and walked on the following trails: Quarry Pond Trail, Broadwalk to Turtle trail, to Uplands Woods Trail to Forest Glade Trail returning to parking lot on Cedar Grove Terrace. For the most part the trails were dry, the tall grass cut down in most areas. It is amazing that with all of the recent rainfall (4.00") earlier in the week, that the area is not wetter. Also, the leaning trees near the Cedar Grove Terrace Parking Lot have been marked with white "X's" but are still there. The attached pics show where the bog bridges have been cleared of grass. Also, there is a pic of the normally submerged intake cage in the pond adjacent to the ROW access road. I replaced 10 Trail maps at the Kiosk."



M. Reeves said that he had expected 10 ft of the Broadwalk Trail to be cleared but it looked like only 4 ft had been cleared. K. Tucker asked J. Lovelace to instruct CCS to proceed with this work while the area remains “bone dry” and larger equipment can be brought into an otherwise soggy area.

K. Tucker reported that she talked to Ryan Walsh about mowing the mugwort in the Cedar Grove meadow next to the passive parking area. He stated that the town crew will do this in October, before mugwort reseeds, and again in spring while the meadow grasses are dormant.

K. Tucker asked for a work party to cut back the Wollocks Pond Trail on Thursday, September 22 at 9am. Bring trimmers. Meet at the passive parking lot.

D. Other: **1. Discuss ELT Chestnut tree planting.**

Prior to the meeting, a Washington Post article entitled, “Gene editing could revive a nearly lost tree. Not everyone is on Board” by Dino Grandoni, had been forwarded by ELT’s Tom Soboleski. Several ELT stewards commented by e-mail, as a follow-up to the article, that hybrid American Chestnuts had been planted in Cross Lots, a land trust managed property.

5. New Business: There was no new business.

6. Financial Report

A. Proposed Expenditures: K. Tucker reported that the following expenses have been paid: 1. Clerk. 2. Clarks Custom Services (900 in July and 900 to be paid for August). There is \$10,218 remaining in the ECC budget for FY2022-2023.

7. Other: J. O'Brien read another letter received from T Mobile Northeast dated July 7th. They are applying for a telecommunication petition for 6 new panels to be placed on top of the 124ft water tower next to the Pratt Reed Factory. J. Lovelace said that the Town should make sure there is enough room for the Town's own equipment.

8. Adjournment: With a motion by M. Reeves and a 2nd by J. Lovelace, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.

Next Scheduled Meeting October 13, 2022, Auditorium, 7:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Susan K. McCann
Clerk